

Remarks

The applicants appreciate Examiner Choi's thorough examination of the prior art in connection with this patent application. However, the applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of dependent claims 3 and 6, the subject matter of which has been incorporated into amended independent claims 1 and 5, respectively.

More specifically, the prior art of record does not teach or suggest:

defining a retention period attribute for the data set wherein the data set is deleted from the data structure upon expiration of the defined retention period.

At page 603 of the Everest reference, a "useful life" attribute is provided. Everest does not teach or suggest using the "useful life" attribute as input into a data retention process for deleting information after the retention period has expired, as recited in amended claims 1 and 5. The data expiration attribute of the applicants' invention enables higher quality data, as it automates the process of locating and removing expired data from other valid data, increasing the overall database quality and accuracy. In the prior art, the DBA is required to review the data in a manual and subjective fashion. In comparison to the applicants' invention, this limitation of the prior art is slow and prone to human error.

Because the prior art of record does not teach or suggest the elements of the pending claims, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103.

Applicants have made a genuine effort to respond to the Examiner's objections and rejections in advancing the prosecution of this case. Applicants believe all formal and substantive requirements for patentability have been met and that this case is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

No additional fee is believed to be due as the result of the filing of this paper. However, any additional fees or credits should be applied to Deposit Account 06-1510 (Ford Global Technologies, Inc.) as authorized by the original transmittal letter in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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